



Enclosure 2a
May 31, 2017

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
February 22, 2017

RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Rhode Island Board of Education met on Wednesday, February 22, 2017, at the Community College of Rhode Island, Warwick.

Attendance was as follows:

Colby Anderson: present (ex-officio, non-voting member)
Amy Beretta: present
Michael Bernstein: **absent**
Maria Chavez Blanco: **absent** (ex-officio, non-voting member)
Colleen Callahan: present
Barbara Cottam: present
Heather Crosby: present
Timothy DelGiudice: present
Dennis Duffy: present
Karin Forbes: **absent**
William Foulkes: present
Jo Eva Gaines: present
Rachelle Green: present
Mike Grey: **absent** (ex-officio, non-voting member)
Thomas Izzo: present
Marta Martinez: present
Daniel McConaghy: present
Stephan Pryor: **absent** (ex-officio, non-voting member)
Lawrence Purtill: present
Joyce Stevos: present
Jeffery Williams: **absent**

Chair Barbara Cottam welcomed everyone to the quarterly meeting of the R.I. Board of Education and announced that the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education would have a brief meeting following the Board meeting to vote on the Diploma System Council Designations. She then thanked the CCRI staff for hosting the meeting, declared a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. Chair Cottam also stated for the record that Board Members Forbes and Bernstein, and President Sanchez, had notified her that they would not be attending the meeting.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Colleen Callahan and seconded by Jo Eva Gaines it was

VOTED: That, the Rhode Island Board of Education accepts the agenda for the meeting of February 22, 2017.

Vote: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Heather Crosby, Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, William Foulkes, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

2a. Minutes of the November 16, 2016, Meeting

On a motion duly made by Timothy DelGiudice and seconded by Rachelle Green, it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Board of Education approves the minutes of the November 16, 2016, meeting

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Colleen Callahan, Heather Crosby, Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, William Foulkes, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Daniel McConaghy, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

[Members Beretta, Martinez and Purtill had to recuse themselves from the vote as they did not attend the August 17, 2016, quarterly meeting of the Board of Education]

3. OPEN FORUM

Chair Cottam announced that no one had signed up to speak at Open Forum.

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIRS

Chair of the Board of Education

Chair Cottam began her report by sharing that she, along with some of the other Board members, recently attended the Installation Ceremony of RI College's 10th President, where President Sanchez eloquently outlined his vision for the college. She also attended the kick-off of the University of Rhode Island's 125th anniversary yearlong celebrations, and, along with President Dooley, she attended the Governor's "Make it in Rhode Island" Economic Summit.

Chair Cottam ended her report by announcing that Governor Raimondo would be joining the Board meeting to talk about her plan to expand the Rhode Island Promise scholarship program.

Chair of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education

Chair McConaghy gave an update on Rhode Island's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan. He affirmed that the Plan is heavily rooted in federal ESSA law, allowing flexibility if regulations for ESSA should change in D.C. A Committee of Practitioners, a 30-member team of diverse stakeholders from across the State, have been meeting monthly to discuss and give input on different elements. RIDE hosted five public forums in the fall to collect input from the community and will offer another set of hearings in the spring. The Plan will be available to the public in June and will be posted on the RIDE website for thirty days for further public input. The complete Plan will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education by September 18, 2017, unless the federal government alters deadlines.

Chair McConaghy also gave a brief update on the Rhode Island Learning Champions initiative, which is part of RIDE's continued work to support proficiency-based learning. The Learning Champions, a group made up of 100 educators will serve as designers, ambassadors, and implementers of resources and tools to help RI schools and districts, will work four days throughout the school year and two days in the summer.

Chair of the Council on Postsecondary Education

Chair Foulkes thanked the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner staff for the extra work they put into understanding the details and the execution of the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship initiative. He believes this scholarship program will be transformational for students, the public institutions of postsecondary education, and the

overall Board of Education. It presents an opportunity for Board members to work together on important issues such as student readiness for postsecondary education, mentoring, and programs like Summer Bridge and Dual Enrollment.

Council Chair Foulkes also gave kudos to the University of Rhode Island on its 125th anniversary celebrations and to Rhode Island College on the inaugural celebrations for President Sanchez.

5. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Commissioner Wagner reported that RIDE recently completed an on-site program review of Rhode Island College's teacher preparation programs and that it will be reviewing the University of Rhode Island's programs this coming spring. At the May meeting of the Board, RIDE and President Sanchez's team will present the report of findings and plans for implementation.

Next, Commissioner Wagner shared that RIDE has reinstated the parent component of SurveyWorks, which had been on hold for the last couple of years. The survey, which is being administered to all parents, will also serve to meet the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requirement that states survey parental reactions of educational services for students with disabilities. The survey was launched two weeks ago and RIDE has already received five-thousand responses. The collected information is a valuable source of data that can be used not only to understand the impacts of our policies, but also as an opportunity to integrate that information into the ongoing ESSA plan and approach, and tie that data into our efforts to support statewide school improvement.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. New Skills for Youth Grant - Update

Commissioner Wagner gave an update on the New Skills for Youth grant award that Rhode Island recently received. A collaborative effort among many of the State's agencies, the work will focus on expanding traditional academic offerings in a way that brings experiential hands-on insights into the traditional academic work anchored in workplace relevance and skills development, into the classroom.

Stephen Osborn, Chief of RIDE's Division of Innovation, gave a presentation on the initiative and noted that RIDE worked closely with the Community College of Rhode Island and the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner to develop the Skills Plan.

He went over the six key objectives for accomplishing the work over the next three years:

1. Demand educational systems that are employer-led and demand-driven based off of "Real Jobs RI". The goal is to make sure that the training that students receive is directly related in context to jobs we are preparing them for.
2. Develop quality and rigor in career pathways for all students to have access to flexible career pathways, including, but not limited to, career and technical education.
3. Establish a career-focused accountability system for K-12 schools, with indicators that will be included in the State's ESSA Plan and reported publicly.
4. Scale pathways that culminate in credentials of value to employers and students.
5. Align state and federal funding streams from education, workforce development, and economic development, to more effectively deliver career-focused pathways.
6. Ensure cross-institutional alignment by collaborating with CCRI, RIC and URI to ensure that student learning in high school is reflected and valued in college.

Mr. Osborn explained that part of the funds will go towards developing a comprehensive communications plan strategy to help re-brand career and technical education and show families and students its value. The next step is to collaborate closely with the State's Performance Management Office in building a robust system of performance management to ensure that everyone in State government is publicly accountable. There is also lots of opportunity for folks to get involved in this work, so individuals from business and industries will be recruited to help support all of these efforts.

b. Diploma System - Council Designations

Commissioner Wagner went over the three distinctions a student could earn along with their high school diploma: the Commissioner's Seal, Seal of Biliteracy, and Pathway Endorsements. Commissioner Wagner proposes these seals to acknowledge the different levels of attainment and unique learning of different students in Rhode Island.

Commissioner Wagner went on to explain the unique qualifications for students to achieve these designations. The Commissioner's Seal, an assessment-based designation, indicates that a student not only met diploma requirements, but also achieved certain standards of literacy and numeracy from a menu of assessments. These assessments would include PARCC, SAT, and AP exams. The Seal of Biliteracy is also an assessment-based designation, which will be awarded if a student is proficient in two languages. The Pathways Endorsement shows that a student achieved a deeper level of learning in their area of interest. These endorsements are not test-based, but rather, a student must demonstrate a course progression, a skills-based component, and life skills they have attained from this deeper learning.

c. Governor's Education Budget Proposal

Governor Raimondo joined the meeting to ask for the Board's support on her proposal to expand the Rhode Island Promise program, which will provide two years of college tuition free at the state's public institutions of postsecondary education. Governor Raimondo went over data showing that since 2010, the American economy has been steadily growing; however, of the new 11.5 million jobs created, only 80,000 are jobs for individuals with a high school diploma or less. Companies are no longer creating jobs for individuals who only possess a high school degree and the Governor wants to address the problem by creating a talent supply pipeline within the State to help the workforce and Rhode Island's economy.

Governor Raimondo shared that she receives many letters from families in support of the proposal and that we should do everything possible to help these families achieve the American dream. She stated that the proposal is not means-tested for a reason in that we need to give middle-class families a break and keep our kids in Rhode Island after graduation.

Governor Raimondo praised the college presidents for the great work that they are doing, however, our graduation rates are not where we need them to be and a lot of that, especially at Rhode Island College and at the Community College of Rhode Island, is affordability. Rhode Island has the second-highest student debt-load per graduate in the nation and graduation rates at our public institutions of postsecondary education are suffering due to student debt being so high. She noted that many states have similar programs and that those states saw double-digit increases in on-time graduations in the first year of inception. Rhode Island invests almost two-hundred million dollars annually in postsecondary education and our postsecondary graduation rates are not where we need them to be.

Chair Cottam acknowledged the Board's appreciation for the focus that Governor Raimondo has put on education over the past two-years. Education is a powerful tool for transformational change and the best investment that we can make as a State is to invest in our people and in our students.

Commissioner Wagner acknowledged that this proposal also helps K-12 education because it gears the whole system in an aspirational way.

Governor Raimondo departed and Kevin Gallagher, Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff, went over a PowerPoint presentation on the proposal. He noted that the key is to try to create the right amount of incentives while avoiding disincentives for the program. He stated that as early as 2020, 70% of jobs in Rhode Island will require some type of

postsecondary education and right now only 45% of working-age adults meet that requirement. Results from a survey that RIDE administers annually to high school seniors indicate that 90% of students want to go to college, however, less than two-thirds actually do. Students report affordability as the top barrier for them not enrolling in college; this program seeks to lessen that barrier.

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must earn enough credits to become a junior. The Governor is proposing a \$10 million budget for this program in the first year, and while it assumes a 25% increase in enrollment at RIC and URI, Mr. Gallagher does not foresee that happening.

After Governor Raimondo and Mr. Gallagher gave their presentations, several Board Members voiced their support for the proposal and the benefits that it will bring to the State.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion duly made by William Foulkes and seconded by Heather Crosby, it was

VOTED: That, the Rhode Island Board of Education adjourns.

Vote: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Heather Crosby, Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, William Foulkes, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.